DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 416 075 SE 061 089

TITLE	Companion Animals. [Information Packet.]
INSTITUTION	National Anti-Vivisection Society, Chicago, IL.
PUB DATE	1996-00-00
NOTE	18p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Anti-Vivisection Society, 53 W. Jackson, Suite 1552, Chicago, IL 60604.
PUB TYPE	Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Instructional Materials; *Laboratory Animals; *Medical Research; *Pets; *Science Education; Stealing; *Veterinary Medicine
IDENTIFIERS	*Animal Welfare; Vivisection

ABSTRACT

This collection of articles reprinted from other National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) publications was compiled to educate the public on issues of importance to NAVS concerning companion animals. Topics covered include spaying and neutering, animal safety, pet theft, and the use of cats and dogs in research. The article on spaying and neutering presents some basic facts about population control in cats and dogs, benefits of surgically sterilizing pets, and early (prepubertal) sterilization. It states that in cats, population control should focus on cats four years of age and younger which produce 90% of kittens in human care while in dogs, euthanasia is not an issue of overpopulation but of aberrant caretaking which leads to euthanasia. The article on animal safety addresses confinement and identification systems to keep animals from getting lost. It contains warnings about leaving animals unsupervised to become targets for pet thieves. Two other articles devoted entirely to pet theft discuss the federal government's failure to enforce the Animal Welfare Act, particularly the recordkeeping requirements for animal brokers who obtain animals from random sources. Those articles addressing the use of cats and dogs for research purposes discuss the histories of the animals as well as scientific arguments against animal experimentation. (PVD)

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Companion Animals

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NAVS Bulletin Spring 1996

Veterinarian's Corner

By Bruce Max Feldmann, DVM
NAVS Consultant

Spaying and Neutering:

Why it's a good idea for your companion animal

This article presents some basic facts about:

- ✔ Population control in cats and dogs;
- ✔ Benefits of surgically sterilizing your pet; and
- ✔ Early (prepubertal) sterilization.

Population Control: Cats

Over 90% of kittens in human care are produced by cats four years of age and younger. Over 90% of female cats over four years of age in human care are spayed. Thus, the answer to cat population control is spaying cats before they come into their first heat. In other words, the answer is getting caretakers of female cats to spay sooner, not getting more caretakers of female cats to spay.

What about male cats? Even with 90+% of male cats being castrated (neutered), the remaining uncastrated toms are more than able to impregnate all the females in heat. So, while male cats should be castrated for their own good (more about that later), the scarce resources available for cat population control should be focused on spaying pre-estrual (pre-first heat) females. Some form of carrot-and-stick approach to female cat caretakers is crucial to success in controlling the cat population.

Population Control: Dogs

There is no significant dog overpopulation problem. The dog problem is aberrant caretaking leading to euthanasia. Many cats do go from womb to tomb; i.e., from their original home, they go to euthanasia. But the vast majority of dogs killed at shelters and humane societies go from womb (first caretaker) to new (second) caretaker to tomb. In other words, there are available caretakers for most puppies. But too many of these caretakers are either knowingly irresponsible or simply ignorant of what responsible dog care entails.

This irresponsibility or ignorance leads many dog caretakers to abandon their dogs to euthanasia for a variety of reasons. Aberrant dog care can only be solved by education and appropriate screening of and limitations on prospective dog caretakers. As with cats, over 90% of female dogs in human care are eventually spayed. And while there are powerful reasons to spay and castrate dogs (more later), no amount of dog sterilization (short of 100%) will address the real dog problem: aberrant caretaking leading to euthanasia.

Benefits to Your Pet

Spaying or castrating your cat or dog should be done for the sake of your companion animal. The decision to sterilize or not is really a "no-brainer." Anyone who resists spaying or castrating their

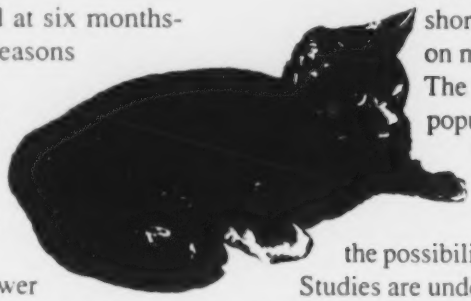
Photo: James P. Rowan

companion animal does not truly have their best interests at heart.

Malignant breast cancer is common in unspayed and late-spayed animals. Spaying female cats and dogs before their first heat period reduces to almost zero the chance of malignant breast cancer later in life. Spaying before the second heat period has much less an effect but still reduces the chance a lot. But spaying after the second heat period will have no effect on the development of mammary cancer. However, spaying should be done anyway for population control and to prevent uterine infection (pyometra), which can kill.

Male cats should be castrated at six months-of-age or younger for a ton of reasons such as:

- to reduce roaming and thus lower the chance of being lost, stolen, hit by a car, contracting disease (e.g. leukemia, cat HIV, infectious peritonitis);
- to reduce fighting and thus lower the chance of abscesses and other diseases; and
- to avoid development of undesirable behaviors (e.g. territorial marking with urine) which can lead to euthanasia.



Male dogs should be castrated at six months of age or younger:

- to reduce the chance of prostate disease (e.g. cancer, infection, enlargement):
- to eliminate the chance of testicular cancer; and
- to reduce roaming and inter-male aggression.

Prostate diseases and testicular cancer are common in older, uncastrated dogs.

Surgical sterilization leads to a longer and healthier life for your companion animal. In short, if you really care for your companion animal, spay or castrate at six months of age or younger.

There are no known negative effects on development or behavior when dogs and cats are surgically sterilized. The occasional female gets urinary incontinence later in life, but the disorder is treatable. Some sterilized dogs and cats do lose the ability to control their appetites, but this problem is easily addressed by feeding measured amounts of food twice a day so that a healthy weight is maintained.

Early (Prepubertal) Sterilization

In recent years, there has been much talk and scientific study of early (prepubertal) sterilization of puppies and kittens in public shelters and humane societies. A few facilities have been for many years sterilizing 8-16 week-old puppies and kittens as a way of contributing to population control. There appear to be no negative effects in terms of either increased anesthesia/surgery deaths or short-term (up to one year) effects on maturation, behavior or disease. The practice is promising as a cat population control measure and, thus far, has a clean bill of short-term health. But, scientifically speaking, the jury is still out on the possibility of negative long-term effects.

Studies are underway. Proponents of early sterilization believe that the population control potential of this practice trumps the potential of possible negative long-term effects.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Spay your female cat or dog companions early for their own sake, as well as a population control measure.

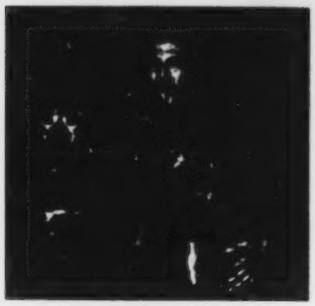
- Castrate male dogs and cats for the sake of their health.

- Encourage your state and local governments to enact legislation requiring companion animals to be spayed or neutered. Help put shelters out of business by eliminating the homeless population!

Dr. Feldmann welcomes readers to submit questions which may be answered in future editions of this column. Send any correspondence to his attention, care of the NAVS Bulletin, *53 W. Jackson Blvd. #1552, Chicago, IL 60604.*

NAVS Bulletin Summer 1996

Veterinarian's Corner



COMPANION ANIMAL SAFETY: CONFINEMENT AND ID SYSTEMS

By Bruce Max Feldmann, DVM
NAVS Consultant

Companion animals enrich our lives. They provide companionship, affection and, sometimes, a sense of security to our homes. But we, in turn, have a responsibility for our companions that goes beyond feeding them and caring for their health. That is providing a safe environment and protecting them against harm from others.

Despite our best efforts, some companion animals kept confined (the enclosed-backyard dog, for example) still do escape from their protected environment. The obvious dangers posed by traffic and getting lost are compounded by unscrupulous individuals who steal animals and resell them to others or into laboratory research.

If escape of your dog is a recurrent problem, consult your veterinarian, a professional dog trainer or dog behaviorist in order to devise a behavior modification program appropriate to your situation. If conventional behavior modification is inapplicable or does not work in your case, then an electronic fence system may be what you need.

There are half-a-dozen or more "invisible fence" systems available through pet stores, hardware stores and various mail order catalogs. Each system has its respective advantages and limitations. Most of the systems are, however, pricey. A simple and cheap alternative is to use copper wire and a fence charger (electric fence transformer), both of which can be purchased at hardware stores (the latter also at pet stores). Creative use of the copper wire and charger along a backyard fence or fence line usually cures a canine escape artist quickly of his/her propensity to escape.

But what if, in spite of all your diligence and responsible efforts at confinement, your dog still escapes, what then? How can you—in advance—help insure his/her return to the safety and comfort of your home? Well, the simplest and cheapest way to avoid permanent loss of your dog (or cat) is an identification (ID) tag attached to his/her collar.

It never ceases to amaze me that so many animal caretakers fail to protect their animal companions with an ID tag. Every dog and cat should have some form of ID, even cats who are considered "100% indoors;" there is always the possibility of accidental escape. It happens. I've heard many a sad tale from caretakers of "100% indoor" cats who have permanently lost their loved companions, because someone (e.g. a visitor, household worker) left a door or window open. An ID tag is not a guarantee of return, but it has united many a lost companion animal with his/her caretaker.

Cat caretakers are especially resistant to collaring and tagging, believing that collars are dangerous. This fear is greatly exaggerated. Far more cats disappear and never return than cats who get their lower jaw or a front paw caught in a collar. And most, if not all, front paw and lower jaw hangups can be avoided by applying the collar relatively snugly. When properly applied, a cat collar allows only one finger to be slipped under it (for dogs, two fingers is about right). Problems with a cat collar getting caught on a tree branch or fence are largely eliminated by using one of the various safety collars available at pet stores.

Tattoos are another method of identifying a companion animal. As with collar ID tags, tattoos have their limitations. First, some companion animals, especially cats, are so furry on the abdomen (where the tattoo is placed) that, after tattooing, the shaved hair regrows and completely obscures the tattoo. Second, a decision has to be made as to what number to tattoo on the animal.

There are several tattoo systems in use, each with its own central record system, tattoo number system, and 800 phone number. Social security number tattoos are relatively useless, as these are accessible to another person only through a court order from a judge (even cops need a court order to access someone's social security number). Driver's license numbers are fine (a) as long as you don't leave the state with your companion animal, and (b) your companion's abdomen is big enough to handle the number (my driver's license number has ten characters—too many to fit as a tattoo on my 20-pound dog's abdomen).

The "ID chip" is a promising advance over the traditional tag or tattoo. Several enterprising companies have attempted to establish a standard ID chip system of identifying companion animals. A numbered ID chip is injected, by a vet, with a syringe under the skin over the shoulders, just like a vaccine. The chip number can then be read with a hand-held wand when it is passed over the animal's shoulders. Unfortunately, the various ID chip systems have been mutually exclusive; the wand of Company A would not read the ID chips of Company B and vice versa.

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Happily, early this year the competing companies agreed to produce and market a universal wand that would read every company's chips. The ID chip method of identifying companion animals may be the best answer yet to the companion animal ID problem.

However, the ID chip system has its limitations too. First, unless the animal shelters, humane societies, and SPCA's in your immediate area (say within a two—five mile radius of your home) have and use a universal wand on each and every captured or surrendered animal, it makes little sense to have a chip put in your animal companion. Second, a small percentage of companion animals reject and extrude the chip. Also a small percentage of the injected chips migrate under the skin away from the original injection site, so they are missed by the wand when it is passed over the shoulders. If the public and private animal shelters in your immediate area are actually using the universal wand on every animal, then I would consider the ID chip to be a good identification method for your companion animal.

Companion animals deserve the security provided by easy identification and a secure environment. The loss of a companion through illness or accident is always sad, but a loss that could have been prevented is tragic for the animal as well as for his/her human caretaker.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Assess the security of your current environment and keep fences and gates in good repair.

- Provide clear and permanent identification for your companion animals. Tags attached to collars that are not always worn provide no security at all.

- Consider whether ID chip implants, tattoos or tagging is appropriate for your animal.

- Don't leave your companion animal in an unsupervised yard with unencumbered access from the outside. Low fencing or gates without locks provide temptation to unscrupulous individuals on the prowl for unprotected animals. Your cat or dog could become an easy target for people who steal pets for resale, to claim a reward or who sell animals into medical research.

Dr. Feldmann welcomes readers to submit questions which may be answered in future editions of this column. Send any correspondence to his attention, care of the NAVS Bulletin, *53 W. Jackson Blvd. #1552, Chicago, IL 60604.*

A Legacy To Living

Your dedication towards ending vivisection is expressed through both actions and financial support. By remembering the National Anti-Vivisection Society in your will, you continue the fight for respect, compassion and justice on behalf of all creatures.

Many estate planning options are available. To help you decide which is best suited to you, NAVS offers a brochure, *Charitable Giving Through Estate Planning*. Please call (1-800-888-6287) or write if you would like a copy.

If you wish to remember NAVS in your will, consult your attorney, financial advisor or estate planner. Whatever form your gift takes, the Society suggests the following language to be included:

"To the National Anti-Vivisection Society, 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, 60604, I bequest the sum of _____ for the general purposes of the organization."

We wish to thank and commend those who provide for animals in this way. We are certain that their legacy will ultimately include an end to vivisection and a greater compassion and respect for all animals.

NAVS Bulletin Brief Winter 1996

Pet Theft Escalates While Federal Government Idles

The problem of "pet theft" is one dear to the heart of anyone who has shared their life with a companion animal. A dog disappears from his fenced-in enclosure while you're at the store. A cat, let out for the night, never returns. What is the federal government doing about the loss of a beloved companion? Not much.

Marshall Smith is a Senior Regulatory Enforcement Investigator with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service/ Regulatory Enforcement and Animal Care (APHIS/REAC), based in Missouri. Smith has blown the whistle on REAC's failure to enforce the Animal Welfare Act, especially the failure to enforce record-keeping requirements for Class B "random source" animal dealers.

Class B dealers sell animals to research laboratories for experimentation. The record-keeping requirements were enacted to address the problem of pet theft, by making dealers account for where they get each animal in their care. Failure to keep and show proper records could lead to a presumption that the animals were obtained illegally, but the REAC has been turning a blind eye to reporting irregularities, according to Smith.

After trying to expose and remedy the failings of the USDA from the inside, Smith has gone public with his well-documented allegations that the USDA has failed to enforce and has even subverted the Animal Welfare Act, especially with regard to Class A and Class B animal dealers. As a result of his internal efforts, Smith has been denied a well-deserved promotion and has been stripped of any meaningful investigative assignments.

🐾 What can you do? Write to the USDA in support of Marshall Smith and urge the REAC to enforce the laws they are sworn to uphold. Send your letters to: Mr. Terry L. Medley, Associate Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA, 14th and Independence Ave., SW, Room 313-E, Washington, D.C. 20250.

🐾 Call your local animal shelter and ask whether they sell unclaimed stray cats and dogs to research facilities. Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper. Let people know that you care about what happens to companion animals wherever you live.

There is still time to enter the 8th Annual ART FOR THE ANIMALS CLASSIC Contest. The deadline for submissions is June 1, 1996. Cash prices awarded in an adult and three youth divisions.

Whether you're a closet Picasso or afraid to paint your closet, if you love animals, this contest is for you.

Call 1-800-888-NAVS for your Animals Classic VIII" Entry Form today!

Holloman Chimps Still on Hold

The fate of 150 chimpanzee survivors of the U.S. Space Program is on hold for a few more months. Thanks to the hundreds of NAVS members who wrote and called their Congressmen last summer, the permanent transfer of the chimps to The Coulston Foundation, which conducts lethal toxicological experiments on non-human primates, was defeated, but the fight is not yet over.

In June 1995, the NAVS and In Defense of Animals (IDA), an animal advocacy organization based in California, submitted legislative language to the Senate Armed Services Committee that calls for retirement of 150 Air Force chimpanzees formerly used in space research. These groups, along with Dr. Jane Goodall and others, helped defeat legislation that would have given ownership of the Air Force chimpanzees, along with a $10.5 million publicly funded housing facility on Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico, to the Coulston Foundation. The chimps are still being "leased" by Coulston until resolution of this matter.

NAVS and IDA are now drafting a plan for a sanctuary that they hope will eventually become a haven for the Air Force and other chimpanzees currently housed in biomedical laboratories across the U.S.

In the meantime, the Air Force is reconsidering the process by which they virtually gave the chimpanzees and their facilities to Coulston. One option may be to initiate a bidding process prior to the transfer of ownership to any party.

🐾 What can you do? KEEP UP THE PRESSURE! Remind your representatives in the House and Senate that you care about the fate of these chimpanzees. Encourage the Air Force to live up to its 1992 promise to spend $6.4 million to retire—honorably discharge—the survivors of its U.S. Space Program. NAVS continues to closely monitor any developments. Write to Secretary of the Air Force Sheila E. Widnall, 1670 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20330-1670. Watch the upcoming *NAVS Bulletin* for more information.

🐾 Give generously to NAVS. Plans for the sanctuary are underway and NAVS has been asked to contribute $50,000 towards a permanent home for these chimps. We need your help! Together we can make it a reality.

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Pet Theft Bills Target Random Source Dealers

Congress Hears Testimony on Companion Animals Sold for Experimentation

by David Meyer, Last Chance for Animals

On August 1, 1996, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry held a hearing on two bills, HR 3398 and HR 3393, which were recently introduced to amend the Animal Welfare Act. These bills are based upon legislation drafted by the Society for Animal Protective Legislation (SAPL) and are designed to modify the current system of licensing which allows dealers to illegally obtain animals for sale into research.

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA), passed in 1966, had as one of its principal objectives to "protect the owners of animals from the theft of their animals, [and] to prevent the sale or use of animals which have been stolen." The act created a licensing system for who could sell animals into experimentation. Class "A" licenses are issued for breeders of animals, while Class "B" licenses are issued for animal brokers who obtained their animals from "random" sources.

Photo: P&E Communications

Over the last 30 years, some Class B dealers have consistently purchased stolen or fraudulently obtained animals, and sold them to research facilities across the country. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) was given the responsibility of administering this system, but has been unable to adequately regulate what is in essence a system of interstate commerce in stolen goods.

This term, Representative Canady (R-Florida), along with Representatives Brown, Dornan, Hutchinson, Goss, Murtha and Foley, introduced H.R. 3398, the Pet Safety and Protection Act of 1996. Reps Fox and Lantos introduced HR 3393 entitled "The Family Pet Protection Act." Both acts have significant bi-partisan cosponsorship, and seek to eliminate the ability of Class B dealers to sell dogs and cats into experimentation.

According to USDA regulations, Class B dealers must obtain their animals from animal regulation facilities (pounds), other dealers, or private individuals who have bred and raised the animals themselves. Class B dealers can then legally resell unlimited numbers of these animals to research facilities. Prices are usually based upon weight, with dogs selling from $150 to $700 and cats from $50 to $200.

Many of these animals were at one time household pets, so it is impossible to visually distinguish between animals who were obtained legally for research and companion animals who were stolen. Even animals bearing tattoos or other identification might have been obtained legally by the dealers and are, therefore, used without concern by researchers. The evidence is clear that many of these "random source" animals have in fact been acquired illegally, through theft and fraud. Representative George Brown, a strong supporter of the Animal Welfare Act and cosponsor of HR 3398, wrote to the Secretary of Agriculture in 1993 complaining that, "Credible evidence has come forth that USDA

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licensed animal dealers routinely buy and sell stolen family pets."

Class B dealers across the country employ "bunchers" to gather animals for them. These bunchers are essentially unlicensed dealers. They sell animals for five to fifty dollars to the Class B dealers. These exchanges may occur among individuals, or at "gun & dog" auctions in the Midwest. It is these bunchers who have been most frequently implicated in the actual theft of household companion animals.

Moreover, some bunchers and Class B dealers fraudulently obtain animals by answering "free to good home" ads in newspapers. By promising safe and loving homes, dealers may trick unsuspecting owners into relinquishing their pets. The pets are then sold to research facilities. For example, Last Chance for Animals (LCA) uncovered a pet theft ring in which Barbara Ruggiero and Frederick Spero, both USDA licensed Class B dealers, employed Ralf Jacobsen to help answer ads for animals that were then sold to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Loma Linda University and the Sepulveda VA Hospital in California. Although animal advocacy organizations have exposed many individual pet thieves, it is impossible to document exactly the incidence of these illegal transactions.

In an apparent attempt to minimize the possibility of owners recovering stolen companion animals, unscrupulous Class B dealers routinely transport animals to research facilities hundreds, and even thousands of miles away. One Pennsylvania Class B dealer said that a verbal "gentleman's" agreement existed between the dealer and the institutions he supplied. The agreement stated that random source animals sold to each institution could not be obtained from within an eighty mile radius of the institution. In another example, delivery records obtained from the VA Hospital in Long Beach, California, show that in two transactions Mississippi Class B dealer Jerry Vance supplied ten dogs from ten different states, including West Virginia and Florida. This makes it virtually impossible for owners to locate their stolen pets in research facilities.

"In an apparent attempt to minimize the possibility of 'owners' recovering stolen companion animals, Class B dealers routinely transport animals to research facilities hundreds, and even thousands of miles away."

The AWA explicitly states that "each dealer...shall allow, upon request and during business hours, police or officers of other law enforcement agencies with general law enforcement authority (not those agencies whose duties are limited to enforcement of local animal regulations) to enter his or her place of business to inspect animals and records for the purpose of seeking animals that are missing...." Many local law enforcement officers are unaware of this federal law, and therefore incorrectly assume that a search warrant must be obtained before a search can be made of a dealer's facility. Some local authorities also assume that since the dealers are regulated by a federal agency, the local authorities have no jurisdiction. The USDA claims that pet theft is a crime to be investigated by state and local police, and that USDA responsibility is to stop the "trafficking" in stolen animals but not specifically to deal with the "act" of pet theft per se. Dealers who wish to avoid investigation effectively exploit these ambiguities in the law to thwart those searching their facilities for stolen animals.

When attempting to find stolen animals, both citizens and law enforcement officers are routinely refused entry to dealers' facilities. For example, a detective of Jefferson County, Missouri, was denied access to a building on the property of Raymond Eldridge, a licensed Class B dealer. When the detective notified the USDA, it responded, "this office contacted Mr. Eldridge and explained the nature of your complaint...no further action is anticipated at this time."

Some Class B dealers have gone so far as to threaten with violence those seeking to legally obtain entry to their facilities. In 1995, after the Pennsylvania Deputy Attorney General verified the legality of entry, a Cumberland County law enforcement officer and a representative of LCA attempting to conduct an inquiry into missing animals were literally chased from the facility of Class B dealer Bruce Rotz, amidst threats and intimidation. The incident was caught on camera and aired on station WHPTV in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Rotz, repeating the same behavior he exhibited during similar search attempts in 1985 and 1990, insisted that he would only speak to "the federal man."

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), an agency of the USDA, is charged with enforcing the AWA, yet APHIS inspectors themselves have been denied access to dealers' facilities for even routine inspections. A USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audit Report No. 33600-1-Ch, dated January 5, 1995, showed that certain dealers had histories of refusing to submit to inspections by APHIS personnel. Despite this, these dealers continued to operate under

APHIS licenses, and as a result "bring into question APHIS' ability to effectively function as an enforcement agency."

The OIG Audit Report went on to state that APHIS "generally accommodated facility operators who routinely refused APHIS inspectors access to their facilities instead of issuing suspensions or taking other available enforcement actions. As a result, facilities had little incentive to comply with the requirements of the Act."

Photo: Carl Purcell

Such inspections should, to the extent practical, be unannounced so that owners and operators cannot remove animals from the premises or otherwise conceal violations before the inspector arrives. The OIG Audit Report documented that APHIS inspectors called ahead to schedule appointments because of the owners repeated refusal to cooperate in allowing inspections. Another OIG Report No. HQ-3301-66 dated December 15, 1995, cited an APHIS sector supervisor who "allegedly notified an animal facility owner of an impending investigation on his facility."

Sometimes, refusal to submit to inspections has been accompanied by even more egregious actions. USDA records reveal that Oregon Class B dealer James Joseph Hickey Jr., a major supplier to UCLA, Cedars Sinai Medical Center and other California research facilities, refused to give APHIS inspectors access to records and interfered with inspections through verbal abuse and threats. Across the country, the actions of many licensed dealers reveal a general attitude of disrespect and a sense of immunity to the law.

Under the 1990 amendment to the AWA (called the Pet Protection Act), Class B dealers must document who supplied them with random source animals. The regulations enforcing this Act went into effect in August, 1993. This newly required paperwork has proven to have little effect on the flow of animals of unknown origin. However, widespread inadequacies and falsification of the required paperwork has provided a vehicle to clearly see the extent of the problem.

USDA Assistant Secretary Michael Dunn testified at the August 1 hearing that fully fifty percent of the records designed to show the acquisition sources of Class B dealers were either incomplete, inaccurate, or outright forged.

Critics of the bills, mostly representing the research community, claim that no problem exists, and that these bills are merely an attempt to interfere with the use of animals in experimentation. While some legislators championed their cause, others could not ignore the evidence that a widespread problem does in fact exist, and these bills simply work to insure that stolen animals are not used in experimentation.

As this session of Congress draws to a close, the issue will be taken up again by the next Congress. If there is significant public interest, these bills will be reintroduced and a companion bill will be introduced in the Senate. Because of the powerful lobbying ability of the research community and its desire to insure a steady flow of inexpensive dogs and cats, there will likely be much debate on this issue. But supporters of the bills are confident that the interests of companion animals and their human caregivers will be victorious.

David Meyer is the Executive Director of Last Chance for Animals. LCA is part of a coalition of 500 animal protection, law enforcement and civic organizations working to stop pet theft.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Write to your local congressional representatives encouraging them to support these bills.
- If a Class B dealer operates in your area, encourage local officials to conduct regular oversight investigations of their premises.
- Keep your own companion animals safe with appropriate fencing, supervision and identification.
- If you are adopting out a companion animal to a stranger, arrange to meet them at their home, not yours, to assess their suitability to care for the animal.

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THE BETRAYAL OF "MAN'S BEST FRIEND"

Highly social, fiercely loyal, intelligent and fun loving, dogs are the quintessential companion animal. In fact, people have lived with dogs longer than they have with any other animal–more than 10,000 years. In that time, dogs have served people in many, many ways. They guard our homes, herd our sheep, help us track criminals, entertain us in movies and television, and serve as the eyes, ears and limbs of the physically challenged. They have defended us against assault, pulled us from burning buildings, and found our lost children, all in return for a pat on the head, a biscuit and a warm spot near the hearth.

We now know that dogs contribute significantly to our general well-being, and perhaps even help us live longer. The simple act of petting a dog can slow our heart rate and lower our blood pressure. Emerging evidence suggests that some dogs may even be able to predict epileptic seizures in their human companions.

Most of all, dogs give us that which we seek more than anything else...unconditional love. We are both awed and flattered by their unquestioning devotion. The bond of love and companionship we share with dogs can be at least as strong as with other human beings. When our dogs die, we mourn their loss much as we would for any other family member.

OUR LONG HISTORY TOGETHER

If we look closely, we can see that the behavior of dogs can be traced to their closest living relative in the wild, the wolf. Wolves live and hunt in packs, which are family groups that generally range from 8 to 20 members. Each pack has a definite social

FIELD NOTES
Research Under the Microscope

Through grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), your tax dollars have paid for:

- Brain damage experiments and brain dissection on puppies (Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, New York City, S408,463)
- Bone overload experiments on beagles (Purdue University, S260,853)
- Heartbeat experiments on dogs (Massachusetts Institutes of Technology, S326,152)
- Highly repetitive colon cancer drug toxicity studies on dogs (Yale University, S162,322)
- Highly repetitive studies on drug dependency with sedatives using dogs (University of Miami, S243,152)

The number of regulated dogs used by registered research facilities in 1994: 101,090

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order, and all pack members have an individual rank within the pack. Members who are higher in the social order dominate those who are lower. Dogs consider the people and animals they live with as their "pack." In the eyes of your canine companion, you are definitely "top dog," and he or she will do almost anything to please you. They look to us, just as wolves look to the head of the pack, for a sense of security and safety.

Most of a dog's behavior is inherited, not learned, and reflects pack behavior retained from their distant past. For example, dogs dig holes and bury bones because their ancestors buried leftover food from a hunt to protect it from other animals. When locked away from others, many dogs howl, just as wolves do, in an attempt to reestablish pack unity.

RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR CANINE FRIENDS

Having lived together for thousands of years, people and dogs share a long history together. When animals have been domesticated, as dogs have, they lose much of their ability to survive in the wild. By bringing dogs into our homes, we have accepted the moral and social responsibility to provide for their basic needs, including food, water, shelter and veterinary care, as well as opportunities for exercise and play. And perhaps most importantly, they are entitled to the same companionship and loving attention they so willingly and enthusiastically give us. Dogs are highly social animals, and they need our company as much as we need theirs.

In fact, dogs seem to know no other way than to freely give their entire being. Perhaps that is why we feel such outrage when this mutually trusting relationship is so cruelly betrayed at the hands of the vivisector.

Researchers justify their use of dogs by saying that they are easily available and the size of their organs are comparable to humans. Ironically, it is the dogs' high level of intelligence within the animal kingdom, and the fact that researchers are able to easily recognize their levels of well-being or discomfort, that has made them an "ideal" animal model in research.

Thus the very nature of our relationship with dogs has made them a preferred research tool. We know their reactions so well because they have been such an important part of our lives for thousands of years. And because they accept us as their "top dog," they can be handled quite easily in the laboratory.

BRED FOR RESEARCH

Today, thousands of dogs are purposely bred for laboratory use to ensure uniformity with certain genetic and environmental standards. Beagles are most commonly bred for research because of their friendly nature and their manageable size. In states and counties that allow pound seizure, researchers also purchase dogs (and cats, too) from animal shelters. These animals are either strays who were not adopted or lost companion animals.

Purpose-bred research dogs, born in a breeding facility and shipped to a laboratory when they attain the correct weight, never know a loving home or the simple joy of running across a grassy field on a sunny day. The only human touch they experience

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POUND SEIZURE:
A Steady Supply of Laboratory Subjects

In addition to purposely breeding dogs for research, animal dealers often purchase abandoned and unwanted dogs and cats from local animal shelters for the purpose of reselling them to local laboratories, research centers or universities. This is part of an extremely large and profitable industry that also includes the notorious "puppy mills," where dogs are bred under inhumane and unhealthy conditions, only to be sold later to some pet stores.

Laws vary from state to state and county to county across the U.S., and in those areas which allow pound seizure, homeless strays are carted off to the local laboratory, research center or university to be used in experiments. These strays are often lost animal companions, as well as ones who have been picked up by some "bunchers."

These bunchers–an important link in the animal dealer network–snatch cats and dogs from streets and neighborhoods because it is obviously more profitable to obtain animals for resale without paying a breeder for them.

Companion animals are thought to be particularly good laboratory subjects because they are generally healthy, well cared for and fully vaccinated–in other words, primed and ready for the next experiment. Companion animals trust the human touch, and are therefore more manageable.

RESCUED!

Thanks to the pressure exerted by the Animal Rights Coalition (ARC), the University of Minnesota Medical School has stopped using dogs to teach physiology, sparing about 150 dogs a year–and saving about $35,000 to $40,000 annually.

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is when they are being socialized during the critical 8 to 12-week period after birth to *assure that they will be easy to handle later in the laboratory.* Their short, tormented lives are spent in isolated cages, in restraining devices or on operating room tables. Lost or stolen companion animals, accustomed to humane treatment by their owners, suffer the terror of a strange environment–and the pain and shock of being mistreated by humans that were once seen as friends, not enemies. Even before the experiments begin, they suffer the stress of transport as they are packed into cages and moved, often traveling for long periods with minimal food, water or rest.

Dogs have been used extensively in research on the human cardiovascular, respiratory and circulatory systems. Surgical students have also practiced their techniques on dogs. Harvard University conducted the first kidney transplants in dogs in the late 1950s. Since the development of nuclear weaponry, dogs have also been used in radiation experiments, as well as in studies on the effects of smoking and alcohol and drug abuse. In experiments at the University of California at Davis, dogs are used to study the effects of cigarette smoking on penile erection. In this experiment designed to measure penile blood pressure, researchers blow cigarette smoke into the faces of dogs who have had electrodes planted on their penises and tubes inserted into the surrounding arteries.

Dogs are also favorites for testing the toxicity levels of pharmaceutical drugs, all too often becoming the victims of the notorious LD50 (Lethal Dose 50 Percent) test. The LD50 test is used to determine the amount of a substance that will kill half of a test group of animals within a specified time period when that substance is forcibly injected or otherwise forced upon an animal.

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Our canine friends are even considered appropriate models for human anxiety. At the NIH Animal Center in Poolesville, MD, descendants of dogs known to have had "nervous breakdowns" are purpose-bred for experiments designed to study phobic behavior in humans, the nature of panic disorders, and the effect of caffeine on the nervous system.

Dogs have also become the unwitting victims of human vanity. In the 1970s, silicone gel breast implants–80% of which are used simply to modify a woman's natural shape–were tested on beagles. Later, the results of the beagle experiments were falsified in a report published by Dow Corning. When asked why the data reporting tumor development and death in the test dogs were suppressed, a Dow executive said that they had no bearing on the safety of breast implants in humans.

INAPPROPRIATE STAND-INS FOR HUMANS

In justifying his company's actions, the executive inadvertently tripped himself up on a basic fact which anti-vivisectionists have known for decades: that dogs–indeed all nonhuman animals–are not appropriate models for humans because basic anatomical, physiological, metabolic and chemical differences between ourselves and other animals often produce conflicting results. For example, encainide and flecainide, which are drugs used to treat heart arrhythmia, were shown to be safe and effective in dogs, but actually caused heart attacks in humans. Aspirin causes birth defects in dogs (and other animals) but not in people. And the risk of blood clotting, a common side effect of oral contraceptives in human females, actually had the opposite effect in dogs.

Despite these alarming facts, dogs continue to be a common subject in the laboratory, and the cruel betrayal of our canine friends shows little signs of abating. It is particularly tragic, too, when there are many scientifically valid alternatives to using animals that would spare their lives and benefit human health as well.

"RAGS"

By Edmund Vance Cooke

We called him "Rags." He was just a cur,
But twice, on the Western Line,
That old bunch of faithful fur
Had offered his life for mine.
And all that he got was bones and bread,
Or the leavings of soldier-grub,
But he'd give his heart for a pat on the head,
Or a friendly tickle and rub.
Well, whether they stole him, or whether he went,
I am not prepared to say.
But we mustered out, some to beer and gruel,
And some to sherry and shad,
And I went back to the Sawbones School,
Where I still was an undergrad.
One day they took us budding M.D.'s
To one of those institutes
Where they demonstrate every new disease
By means of bisected brutes.
They had one animal tacked and tied
And slit like a full-dressed fish,
With his vitals pumping away inside
As pleasant as one might wish.
I stopped to look like the rest, of course,
And the beast's eyes levelled mine
His short tail thumped with a feeble force,
And he uttered a tender whine.
It was Rags, yes, Rags! who was martyred there,
Who was quartered and crucified,
And he whined that whine which is doggish prayer
And he licked my hand–and died.
And I was no better in part nor whole
Than the gang I was found among,
And his innocent blood was on the soul
Which he blessed with his dying tongue.
Well! I've seen men go to courageous death
In the air, on sea, on land!
But only a dog would spend his breath
In a kiss for his murderer's hand.
And if there's no Heaven for love like that,
For such four-legged fealty–well!
If I have a choice, I tell you flat,
I'll take my chance in hell.

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Do animals have emotions?

Anyone who has ever shared his or her life with an animal already knows the answer to that question. Now authors Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson and Susan McCarthy, authors of *When Elephants Weep: The Emotional Lives of Animals*, report that observational studies by well-known scientists show that animals feel just about every emotion that humans feel, whether it's joy, sorrow, anger, grief, fear, frustration–even disappointment and gratitude.

Some animals even blush, and dolphins hide themselves in shame when they think they've misbehaved. In fact, say Masson and McCarthy, animals may feel emotions even more deeply than humans, because of their inability to speak and "process" their feelings through verbal expression, unlike humans who can soothe themselves by venting their emotions or using their reasoning powers to minimize the hurt.

People generally associate animal emotions with higher-order mammals, such as primates, whales, dolphins, wolves and dogs–perhaps because it is easier to interpret their behavior. The renowned primatologist Jane Goodall has shown us through her observations that chimpanzees experience a sense of loss when a close relative dies and gather food for members of their group too sick or old to fend for themselves. And chimps recognize themselves in the mirror, an indication of self-awareness which generally correlates with an ability to feel empathy.

The more we learn about animals through observational research in their natural habitat, the more it becomes apparent that the creatures who are so often considered "lower forms of life" often possess characteristics that were once thought of as exclusively human. It is also an apt reminder of the tragic implications of viewing animals and humans as "them" and "us," and basing our treatment of them on certain notions which may later prove false.

Examples of adverse drug reactions in humans not predicted by animal experiments

AMINOREX
Pulmonary hypertension

CLINDAMYCIN
Intestinal disease

ISOPRENALINE AEROSOL INHALERS
Asthmatic deaths

STILBOESTROL
Vaginal cancer in female offspring

TYCRYNAFEN
Fatalities

The Scientific Evidence Against Animal Experimentation

Animals are poor models for humans because their bodies work differently from ours. What's more, nonhuman animal species vary widely between one another. What may succeed in one nonhuman animal species may fail dismally in another–or in a human–and vice versa.

Another reason why animals make poor models for human illness is the fact that diseases must be induced in otherwise healthy creatures. These induced symptoms are often far removed from naturally occurring diseases in humans, and some do not occur at all in the animal world. Experimental tumors have been found to be biologically different from spontaneous tumors. They grow more rapidly in the body and are far more susceptible to attack by the body's defense system, which does not occur naturally in humans. And research has shown that imposing disease symptoms in an animal during an artificially controlled experiment cannot adequately predict or duplicate human disease.

Animal models also cannot predict some of the most common or life-threatening side effects of drugs. Because animals do not speak, we can't know if they're experiencing such symptoms as nausea, headache, amnesia, dizziness or depression–all very common side effects of drugs given to humans.

The contributions of animal research to the longer, healthier lives Americans enjoy today have been grossly overstated by the medical community. At best, data derived from nonhuman animals provide a false sense of security and, at worst, they backfire with tragic results. There have been drug therapies that have failed animal tests and later proved to be effective in humans, and drugs that have passed animal trials that later caused harm to humans. This, of course, begs the question: How many worthwhile therapies have been ignored because they did not pass animal tests? And if animal tests are the sure path to medical progress, why did cancer death rates increase between 1975 and 1990, despite the fact that $25 billion have been invested in research?

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Feline FOLLY

Elusive creatures of beauty and wonder, they suffer unspeakable agony as one of the vivisector's favorite biomedical models.

They have been worshipped as gods... celebrated in music and dance on Broadway...and feared for their "mystical" powers. They have been pampered as pets and persecuted as vermin. They are fascinating and finicky–and the most popular companion animal in America today.

Cats are indeed remarkable creatures, with strong, yet graceful bodies perfectly designed for hunting, and an independent nature that can be confounding to people who do not understand that cats have retained more of their "wild" nature than dogs. Their swift, silent movements, aloof behavior and glowing eyes enchant some, while disturbing others. Whether they're watching the world go by from their favorite window or stalking mice in a nearby field, cats seem to have a secret life all their own.

The mysterious glow in a cat's eyes, called *eyeshine*, is not the result of supernatural powers, but rather a special structure at the back of each eye, called a *tapetum-lucidum*, which reflects light. A cat's vision is not as keen as a human's, although they can see better than us in dim light. And, contrary to popular belief, cats cannot see in total darkness.

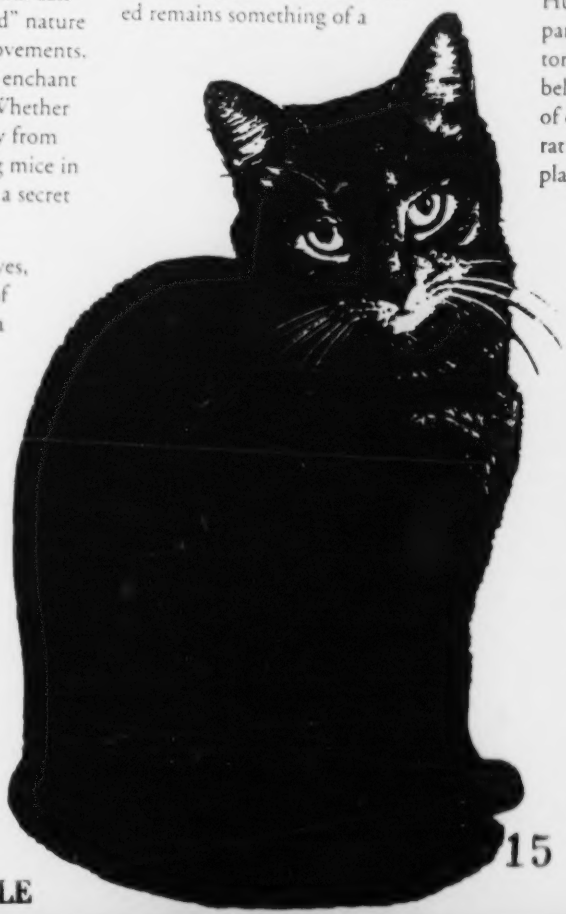
These are magnificent creatures, who can run up to 30 miles an hour, jump five times as far as they are long, rotate each ear independently to follow the slightest sound, and move both halves of their body in opposing directions.

They are also capable of making more than 60 different sounds. From a soft purr to a loud meow or high pitched scream, each sound has a specific meaning, depending on whether a cat is curious, contented, frightened, hungry or threatened.

CATS IN HISTORY

The history of the cat's relationship with humans is as fascinating as the animals themselves. The exact time period in which they became domesticated remains something of a mystery, but it probably occurred around 3500 B.C., when the ancient Egyptians realized that cats killed the rodents who were destroying the grains they kept in storage. Two thousand years later, cats in Egypt had not only become pampered pets, they had been elevated to god-like status. In fact, killing a cat in ancient Egypt was a crime punishable by death.

All that was to change, however, in the Middle Ages, when cats came to be considered the embodiment of evil. Hundreds of thousands of cats–particularly black ones–were mercilessly tortured and burned alive. Today, experts believe that the widespread persecution of cats contributed to the increase in the rat population and the spread of the plague called Black Death.



CATS AS LABORATORY TOOLS

Today, about 55 million cats share our homes and hearts as feline companions. However, many scientists are interested in cats for far different reasons, viewing them only as a convenient "biomedical model." Why? Because they breed readily and are easily available. They are also fastidiously clean animals. Cats are anatomically similar across all strains and pedigrees, and it is easy to place electrodes in any part of the brain of a cat weighing at least 2.5 kilograms.

Cats are used extensively in research involving brain, digestive, spinal cord, speech and visual function. They are also used to study

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alcohol and drug abuse, Alzheimer's disease and narcolepsy (excessive daytime sleepiness). Ironically, the animals who fascinate us for their mysterious, aloof demeanor and independent nature turn out to be one of the most well documented animal subjects in the laboratory. Not even the human brain is as thoroughly mapped as the cat's.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CATS AND HUMANS

Like the dog, the cat is also a poor model for humans. If we were more like cats, we would be able to hear a mouse scurrying in the grass 20 feet away, jump onto the roofs of our homes, and almost always land on our feet from great heights. Common sense and simple observation tell us that cats are far different from people, and this has been proven in the laboratory as well. Scientists now know that a cat's brain is distinctly different in anatomy and function.

In addition, the structure and function of the cat's spleen is far different from the human's. Enkephalins produce lethal hyperthermia in cats but not in us. And the heart drug digitoxin cannot be given to them. There are significant differences between cats and other species as well. For example, cats, horses and pigs are resistant to a neuromuscular blocking drug, but dogs, sheep and cattle are sensitive to it. The effect of histamine on the brain arteries of cats has exactly the opposite effect on primates.

PAINFUL AND REDUNDANT EXPERIMENTS

Despite these differences–and many more–cats continue to be subjected to bizarre and excruciatingly painful experiments, many of them, as so often happens in the research community, needlessly duplicating work already performed elsewhere. The reason is not because the cat is a reliable model for humans, but because cats are appropriate models for themselves! That so much research has been done on cats, and that there is a huge database of information on them in effect seems to encourage even more research on these creatures.

In an experiment already performed by other scientists applying different techniques, researchers at the University of Wisconsin recently blinded newborn kittens using a neurotoxin, then later killed them so that their brains could be examined microscopically. At the National Institutes of Mental Health, a researcher sutured shut the eyelids of cats to simulate blindness and sunk electrodes into the auditory regions of their brains. The researcher discovered that the blinded cats grew longer whiskers to compensate for their lack of sight–hardly a great medical breakthrough and completely lacking in relevance to humans.

Vomiting studies are also popular with research institutions like Rockefeller University, which uses cats who have had their brain stem and spinal cord surgically separated to study how the brain controls nausea and vomiting. Never mind that cats, unlike humans, self-induce vomiting to detoxify their systems. That didn't stop these researchers from paralyzing the decerebrated cats with a drug, hooking them up to a respirator, clamping them into a stereotaxic frame, and forcing them to vomit repeatedly. In one 3-1/2 hour period, a single conscious cat was forced to vomit 97 times.

Meanwhile, the Veterans Administration Medical Centers at Hines, Illinois, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, study sensory deprivation in cats who have had their spinal cords cut–despite the availability of humans who, with informed consent, would be much better test subjects because they would be better able to communicate the return of sensation. Minute improvements in sensation are virtually undetectable in animal models.

Imagine what these helpless cats–creatures who epitomize all that is graceful, beautiful and regal–must go through! It is precisely their capacity to suffer that makes it morally indefensible to use them, and all other animals, in research. In a moral society, all sentient beings must be entitled to equal consideration of their needs and interests.

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FIELD NOTES

Research Under the Microscope

Through grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), your tax dollars have paid for:

- Studies of gasping, as well as brain, nerves, chest wall and diaphragm experiments on cats (Dartmouth College, $201,983 and $177,509)
- Highly repetitive chronic pain experiments on cats (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, $158,122)
- Repetitive stress and strain on skin and joint capsules [knees] in cats (University of Massachusetts Medical School at Worcester, $254,780)
- Electrophysiological research on eye movement in cats (University of Maryland, Baltimore Professional School, $123,517)

RESCUED!

Thanks to pressure by animal advocacy groups, federal funding of brain wound research on cats conducted by Michael Carey at Louisiana State University has been cut off. An investigation by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) revealed inadequate anesthesia and postoperative care, as well as the exclusion of large amounts of data in the researcher's report. Over a period of six years, Dr. Carey shot about 700 cats in the head in experiments that were widely criticized by physicians and surgeons.

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The vivisectors' seeming disregard for the needs of animals–and the utter waste and cruelty of animal experimentation–is perhaps most strikingly apparent in the experiments conducted at UCLA, where researchers mutilated the ears of two-week-old kittens from three different litters. The kittens were then separated from their mothers and litter mates, and each was placed in a canvas bag from which only their heads protruded. Each was then left alone in a room until he or she had given 30 spontaneous isolation calls, so that researchers could compare the loudness of the cries of the deafened kittens with their hearing counterparts.

What was so important to learn that this scientist had to permanently maim these helpless newborns, separate them from their mothers, and force them into complete isolation–alone, terrified and doomed to die? It was simply this: That the calls of deaf animals are louder than those of hearing ones, and that the calls of deaf animals tend to be less variable than hearing ones. Not only did this experiment merely confirm the results of an equally frivolous study conducted four years before, but the observations have been commonly reported in deaf humans for more than 20 years!

Just as senseless is the use of cats and other animals, including dogs, primates, rats, mice–even elephants!–in addiction research. After subjecting these innocent creatures to alcohol, hallucinogenic drugs, sedatives, amphetamines and barbiturates, scientists have discovered these "astonishing" facts: Cats given LSD shiver, groom themselves erratically, flick their limbs and pounce at imaginary objects. Cats consume more alcohol in the presence of a companion than alone. Sober animals attack drunken animals more often than they attack sober animals. Stressed elephants drink more than unstressed elephants. Marijuana decreases sexual appetite in mice. And rats treated with valium show slowed reaction to pain and fear.

Millions of dollars are spent each year in government-funded addiction research on animals that serves only to reinforce what we already know from common sense and our human experience. In fact, the U.S. government allocates more than $500 million each year addicting animals to drugs.

While researchers are busy getting cats, monkeys and other innocent animals hooked on alcohol and drugs at a staggering annual cost, federal assistance to drug treatment programs has been drastically cut. Human drug addicts often must wait two years to be admitted to detoxification clinics because there are not enough of them, and rehabilitation programs are overcrowded and understaffed.

Could not the money allocated for addicting animals to drugs and alcohol be better spent on building drug treatment centers and creating educational programs that would really help people...while sparing animals untold pain, agony and terror?

The number of regulated cats used by registered research facilities in 1994: 32,610

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A QUESTION OF CHOICE

Many people ask, "If, as a society, we find it morally unacceptable to use animals in product testing, research and education, then how can we find the answers we need to ensure our health and safety?"

These people may be surprised to know that most new drug therapies, techniques and procedures that have passed animal tests are also tested on humans before they are approved for general use. These are called *clinical trials*, and for drug therapies, they are typically conducted in four phases. Phase 1 trials examine toxicity levels, metabolic rates and short-term side effects in a small number of subjects. Phase 2 trials record a drug's effectiveness and more common side effects. Phase 3 and 4 trials follow the long-term effects in epidemiological studies and may involve thousands of people.

From an ethical standpoint, there is a very significant difference between animal experiments and clinical trials. Humans may choose whether or not to participate in a clinical trial, a decision known as "informed consent." It must be noted, too, that even for humans, the concept of "informed consent" is a fairly recent one–it did not even gain governmental support until after the post-World War II Nuremberg trials.

Animals have no such choice. This is why it is as wrong to experiment on them as it is to experiment on humans without their consent. Because they cannot say no, they are completely vulnerable to whatever the researcher has in store for them, no matter how much pain and suffering is involved. Because animals are unable to understand or claim their right to be alive, to be free of pain and suffering, and to fulfill their biological potential, it is up to humans to recognize and protect those rights for them, just as we are morally obligated to protect infants, the developmentally disabled and the mentally ill.

Our country was founded on the protection of individual rights. At the time our Constitution was ratified, those rights protected only white males. As our society has developed, those rights have been extended to include all human beings. It is now time for our society to choose the next logical step, and extend our sphere of ethical concern to all creatures.

Humans can choose to make that possible. Today, there would be many more alternatives to using animals in research and testing if more funds were available to develop those alternatives. The choice to allocate funds away from animal research and support the development of alternatives is ours...and ours alone.

Can animals feel pain?

It is hard to believe that reasonable people would respond "no" to that question, but the 17th century philosopher René Descartes denied all consciousness to animals, referring to them as "thoughtless brutes" with no sensory experience whatsoever. In the eyes of Descartes, animals did not have the awareness to feel pleasure or pain, heat or cold, or to smell or taste. So convinced was he that animals were nothing more than mechanistic beings that he compared their screams of pain to the automatic movements of the gears in a clock.

Animals may not always express pain and suffering as we do. They are programmed by nature to hide pain or by masking symptoms of illness or injury to avoid being vulnerable to predators in the wild. But no animal can hide severe or shocking pain, and their screams, convulsions and desperate struggles to escape their torment should be proof for anyone that animals do indeed feel pain.

Compelling evidence suggests that they may feel even more pain than humans. Animals are much more attuned to their environment than humans, and their "flight or fight" responses are much more intense. What's more, the pain they feel may be more severe because they have no way of knowing when the experiment–and the hurting–will end. Put another way, when we go to the dentist, we are able to calm ourselves with the knowledge that it will last only an hour. Animals don't understand what's happening to them.

Only a few laboratory animals escape some pain and discomfort, but even those who experience isolation, depression and anxiety suffer in a different, no more justifiable way. Whether physical or psychological pain, it is as real for animals as it is for humans.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Because the brains of cats have been mapped extensively, and the size of cats' brains are uniform across different breeds, thousands of cats are used each year in brain research. To prepare a cat for brain and neurological examinations, researchers first place the anesthetized animal in a restraining device to hold the head and body perfectly still. Then, they drill a hole in the cat's skull and thread electrodes, which are thin, finger-like wires, through the brain until they reach the section they wish to study and receive a "firing" from a neuron. Once they obtain satisfactory nerve recordings, they hold the electrodes in place by encasing them in protective porcelain and then cementing them onto the cat's skull. Infection at the site where the porcelain meets bone almost always occurs.

With the advent of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computerized axial tomography (CAT) and other noninvasive imaging systems, implanting electrodes into cats' brains is quickly becoming as anachronistic as it is cruel. Nevertheless, animal researchers continue to use this procedure to probe the brains of innocent cats.

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